

Message Text

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TO USMISSION NATO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

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FOLLOWING REPEAT DUBLIN 555 ACTION SECSTATE DTD 24 MAR

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S E C R E T DUBLIN 555

EXDIS

DEPT PLSE PASS OTHER NATO, EC CAPS AS APPROPRIATE

FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP, KISSINGER HENRY A., EI

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SUBJ: MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY ON PORTUGAL

1. SUMMARY: I DELIVERED LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY TO FONMINISTER FITZGERALD THIS MORNING. HE SAID THEY HAVE BEEN "IN TOUCH WITH THE SITUATION" SINCE SATURDAY MORNING AND HAVE CIRCULATED THE GERMAN SUGGESTIONS FOR COOPERATIVE ACTION TO THEIR EC PARTNERS. HE SAID THERE ALREADY APPEARED TO BE DOUBTS AS TO ACHIEVING UNANIMITY AS TO CONTENTS OF MESSAGE AND INDEED THERE ARE DOUBTS THAT ALL NINE WILL BE AGREEABLE TO MAKING ANY DEMARCHE AT ALL. THEY HAVE NOT RECEIVED REPLIES FROM ALL OF THE OTHER EIGHT BUT NOTED THERE WAS NO GREAT ENTHUSIASM IN THE REPLIES SO FAR. ON THE SECRETARY'S LETTER, FITZGERALD WAS CAUTIOUS AND PARTICULARLY CONCERNED THAT PRIVATE REPRESENTATIONS AND PUBLIC STATEMENTS WOULD BE USED BY EXTREMISTS TO THEIR ADVANTAGE AS EVIDENCE OF INTERNAL INTERFERENCE. END SUMMARY.

2. DCM AND I PRESENTED THE SECRETARY'S LETTER TO FONMIN FITZGERALD THIS MORNING. HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY SECRETARY KEATING AND POLITICAL DIRECTOR DORR. AFTER READING THE LETTER FITZGERALD SAID BY WAY OF BACKGROUND THAT THE IRISH HAD BEEN IN CONSULTATION WITH THE OTHER EC EIGHT SINCE SATURDAY MORNING. THEY HAD RECEIVED REACTIONS FROM SOME BUT OTHER REPLIES WERE STILL OUTSTANDING (NUMBER UNSPECIFIED). HIS OWN ATTITUDE WAS ONE OF CAUTION BORDERING CLOSELY ON THE NEGATIVE AND HE WONDERED WHAT EFFECT THE SUGGESTED REPRESENTATIONS WOULD HAVE IN VIEW OF THE CONFUSED SITUATION IN PORTUGAL. HE WAS PARTICULARLY CONCERNED THAT ANYTHING SAID BY THE NINE WOULD BE USED BY THE EXTREMISTS TO FOMENT TROUBLE AND AS EVIDENCE OF OUTSIDE INTERVENTION IN PORTUGUESE INTERNAL AFFAIRS.

3. FITZGERALD ALSO WONDERED IF SOARES WOULD VIEW THIS PROPOSED ACTION BY THE NINE AS HELPFUL. IF SOARES AND THE MODERATES FELT THAT AN EXPRESSION OF CONCERN EITHER BY PRIVATE REPRESENTATIONS OR BY PUBLIC STATEMENTS WOULD BE HELPFUL, THEN THAT ALONE WOULD OF COURSE GO A LONG WAY TO ASSUAGE SOME OF THE IRISH MISGIVINGS. HE APPARENTLY CONSIDERS THE SOARES REACTION TO BE QUITE IMPORTANT.

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RM THE IRISH WONDERED WHETHER OR NOT WE HAD AN ASSESSMENT OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SITUATION, I.E. HOW WOULD THE PORTUGUESE POPULATION REACT TO PUBLIC STATEMENTS OF CONCERN? FITZGERALD RECALLED THAT CHURCHILL IN A BROADCAST SPEECH HAD CRITICIZED DEVALERA AND IRISH ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS REGARDING NEUTRALITY IN WORLD WAR II AND ONLY SUCCEEDED IN UNITING IRELAND SOLIDLY BEHIND DEVALERA WHO WAS THE PRINCIPAL BUTT OF THE CRITICISM.

5. FITZGERALD ALSO WONDERED WHETHER WE HAD APPROACHED THE SOVIETS ABOUT THE PORTUGUESE SITUATION, AND IF SO WHAT ROLE WE SAW THEM PLAYING. HE SAID HE COULD IMAGINE A WIDE RANGE OF POSSIBILITIES BEGINNING ON THE ONE HAND WITH THE POSSIBILITY THAT THEY ARE ACTIVELY INVOLVED, RANGING THROUGH INACTION BECAUSE THE SITUATION SEEMED TO BE GOING WELL FROM THEIR POINT OF VIEW, TO THE OTHER EXTREME OF HAVING NO CONTROL OVER THE SITUATION AT ALL. HE OPINED THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD CONCEIVABLY BE PERSUADED THAT THEIR MEDDLING WOULD BE INIMICAL TO DETENTE.

6. FITZGERALD NOTED FROM THE LETTER THAT AMBASSADOR CARLUCCI WOULD BE SEEING COSTA GOMES EITHER YESTERDAY OR TODAY AND WONDERED IF WE WOULD BE ABLE TO PASS ANY INSIGHTS TO THE IRISH ON SOME OF THE ABOVE QUESTIONS THAT MAY BE GLEANED FROM THAT MEETING OR ANY OTHER MEETINGS WITH THE PORTUGUESE.

7. FITZGERALD CONCLUDED THAT, IN ANY EVENT, IRISH WOULD NOT BE IN A POSITION TO CONSIDER ANY ACTION ON THE SECRETARY'S REQUEST UNTIL ALL OF THEIR EC PARTNERS HAD REPORTED IN. I SAID THAT IN THE MEANTIME WE WOULD INFORM THE DEPARTMENT OF THE IRISH CONCERNS AND WOULD POSE THE IRISH QUERIES FOR MORE INFORMATION. FITZGERALD REPLIED THAT HE HOPED WE COULD KEEP IN CLOSE TOUCH. FYI: FITZGERALD PLANS DEPART TONIGHT FOR 10 DAY - 2 WEEK HOLIDAY IN SOUTH OF FRANCE BUT WILL BE KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH KEATING/DORR. MOORE UNQTE KISSINGER

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